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ABSTRACT

In establishing a framework for successfully dealing with mainstreamed students, the rights and responsibilities of the administrator, psychological services personnel, classroom teachers, and special education teachers should be determined prior to placement of special students. The rights of the mainstreamed student and the other students in the regular classroom should also be delineated. Most classroom teachers with mainstreamed students frequently find adapting to students with physical handicaps less troublesome than adapting to students who have difficulty with cognitive skills. Techniques have been formulated for teaching students with below normal reading aptitude and skills. These procedures involve the use of audiovisual materials, art, music, and drama in assignments and presentations, and can be implemented so that the entire class benefits as well as the mainstreamed students. Classroom management concerns are foremost on the minds of many teachers with mainstreamed students, and planning for room arrangements, safety precautions, and the use of special equipment will be necessary. Mainstreamed students frequently have had little or no experience in the regular classroom and have difficulty adjusting to the expectations of teachers. Since mainstreaming affects social as well as academic learning, teachers should take steps to ensure a positive class environment. Lists of rights and responsibilities of mainstreaming participants and suggestions for teachers to use in socially integrating mainstreamed students into the class are provided. (JD)

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A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND
PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS TO HELP REGULAR TEACHERS
ACCOMMODATE SPECIAL STUDENTS

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Introduction

Teachers have always had students with a wide range of abilities and interests in their classrooms. Many schools have, for many years, followed sound educational practices in providing for the education of students with special needs. Recent legislation at the state and federal levels requires that many more special students be educated, for at least part of the day, in a normal classroom setting. Therefore, the purposes of this paper are: (1) to present the development of a conceptual framework for use by teachers, administrators, and other support personnel as they plan to accommodate special students mainstreamed into regular classrooms; (2) to present procedures that enable regular classroom teachers, who do not have special training, to accommodate mainstreamed students without altering the basic climate, content, and characteristics of the classroom.

Mainstreaming can be educationally beneficial for the special student and for the students in the normal classroom when the following assumptions are made:

1. Special students will be educated in the least restrictive environment appropriate to their needs.
2. Cognitive goals and objectives for the mainstreamed student should be based on a cooperatively developed Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).
3. Educational settings of students to be mainstreamed should enable these students to work toward becoming independent at the same time they develop social interaction skills.

The Models for Successful Mainstreaming

A model for describing the interaction that frequently takes place when students with special needs are mainstreamed into the normal setting is shown in Figure 1. The model was developed to illustrate the relationship between the (1) special education students who is able to be mainstreamed, (2) the administrative and psychological staff, (3) the special education teacher, and (4) the teacher without special training who has mainstreamed students in his or her classroom.

As shown in the model the student with special needs is in the center. The special education teacher, the mainstreamed teacher, and the administration and services have separate, distinct roles and responsibilities. Many times little communication takes place leaving no one responsible for coordinating the instruction for the special student. The area inside the dotted line indicates problems any or all of the persons involved experience. Some of the problems that occur are:

1. Mainstreamed students are moved in and out of the regular classroom without regard for the schedule of instruction.
2. Reasons for placement and the specific goals and procedures for communication about progress are not clear to all concerned.
3. The level of skill development of the special student is not adequately communicated to the mainstreamed teacher.
4. Scheduling of special students into mainstreamed classrooms may increase management problems for both mainstreamed and special teachers.
5. Procedures for fairly evaluating mainstreamed students have not been developed.

The rights and responsibilities of administrators, psychological services personnel, classroom teachers, and special education teachers should be determined prior to placement of special students. It is also equally important that the rights and responsibilities of both special

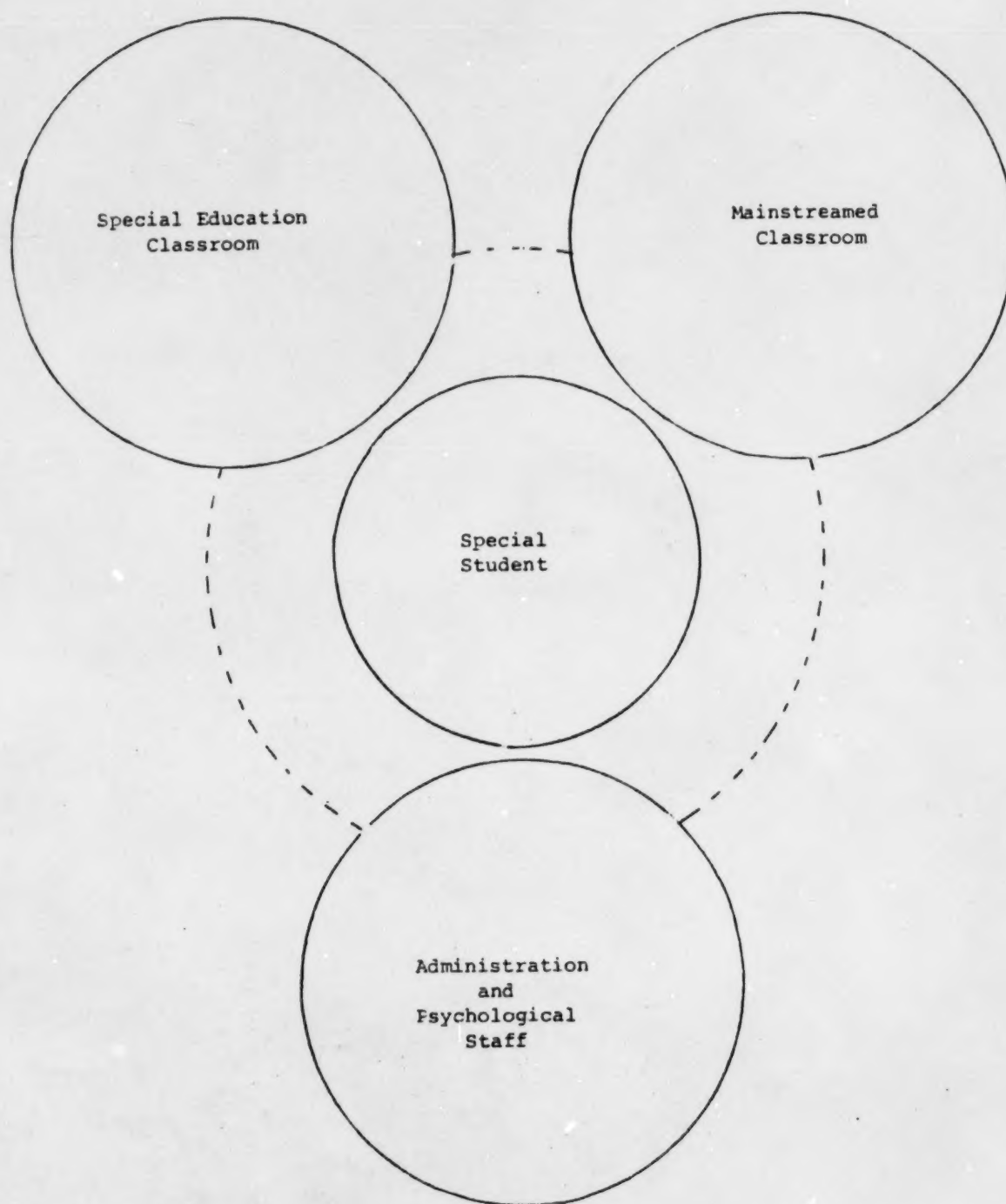


Figure 1

students and regular students in the mainstreamed classroom be established. The next section of the paper will identify these rights.

Special education students in mainstreamed classrooms should:

1. Have all professionals who are responsible for placement informed about those aspects of the handicap which are relevant to classroom instruction.
2. Have the teaching of basic skills (reading, communication, math) to be a high priority when instructional time is planned.
3. Receive primary instruction in basic skills in the special classroom if they have learning problems.
4. Be expected to work at their highest level.
5. Be evaluated in relation to individual goals.
6. Be monitored and receive feedback at frequent intervals.
7. Have activities terminated when the objective is accomplished.
8. Participate in all activities while in a mainstreamed class.
9. Have appropriate equipment and materials for adaptation readily available.

Students in mainstreamed classrooms should:

1. Have classroom instruction in an environment that is not basically changed for mainstreamed students.
2. Have a classroom teacher who recognizes and understands individual differences between all students.
3. Have only those special students mainstreamed who can function without monopolizing the teacher's time.
4. Have an understanding of the nature of the special students' abilities and interests as adaptations are made to instruction.
5. Have expectations of behavior toward mainstreamed students clearly defined and reinforced.

6. Have expectations of behavior of mainstreamed students clearly defined and reinforced.

The mainstreamed classroom teacher should:

1. Have sufficient information about students to be mainstreamed in order to provide the best possible learning experience without changing the basic environment of the classroom.
2. Be responsible for teaching only those objectives which the special student is capable of understanding and accomplishing.
3. Have the number of students mainstreamed limited so as not to interfere with objectives and purposes of instruction.
4. Have only those students mainstreamed who can reasonably be expected to adapt to the social aspects of the regular classroom.
5. Have the necessary equipment and materials readily available to meet the needs of the mainstreamed student.
6. Have mainstreamed students integrated into the classroom one at a time when adjustment may be difficult.
7. Have regular feedback about each student's progress from special teacher and IEP diagnostic team.
8. Have only those students mainstreamed who have demonstrated acceptable classroom behavior.

Special education teachers should:

1. Have regular teacher communicate freely about progress and expectations of mainstreamed students.
2. Have a procedure established for communication with all mainstreamed teachers.
3. Have an opportunity to provide regular teachers with adequate information about each mainstreamed student.
4. Have the diversity and size of their classrooms balanced to provide time for increased individualization needed with mainstreamed students.

Administrators, psychologists, and counselors should:

1. Have classroom teachers willing to accept special students into their classroom.
2. Have classroom teachers willing to spend the extra time and effort needed when students are mainstreamed.
3. Have teachers willing to adapt instructional modes for mainstreamed students.
4. Have special teachers willing to accept responsibility for communicating with mainstreamed teachers and for providing reinforcement when necessary.

As administrators, psychologists, counselors, special education teachers, and classroom teachers identify the rights and expectations of each group or individual, then responsibilities can be determined. The following are some responsibilities that have been identified that should be considered if any programming is to be effective for mainstreaming special students.

Special education students who are mainstreamed should:

1. Participate as fully as possible in class activities without using the handicap as an excuse.
2. Assume the responsibility for their share of individual and group work.
3. Wait their turn for teachers' time when assistance is needed.

Students in classrooms with mainstreamed students should:

1. Provide opportunities for special students to participate in classroom activities.
2. Expect special students to assume responsibility for individual and group work.
3. Be patient with special students when they take longer to do a task.
4. Behave in a courteous manner toward special students.

The classroom teacher with mainstreamed students should:

1. Seek relevant information about mainstreamed students in order to provide more effective instruction.
2. Adapt instructional modes for mainstreamed students when necessary.
3. Operate an organized, orderly classroom with instruction in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.
4. Establish a management system that clearly delineates expectations with respect to classroom behavior.
5. Have the achievements of all students as a primary concern.
6. Provide reinforcement and feedback to special students at frequent and regular intervals.
7. Provide progress reports to special teacher at frequent and regular intervals.
8. Develop a system of recordkeeping that provides both for privacy and for availability to students.
9. Establish procedures for evaluation of student progress which allows for alternate methods of learning activities.
10. Monitor students' attentiveness to task at frequent intervals.

Special education teachers with students who are mainstreamed part of the day should:

1. Assist the mainstreamed teacher in the development of objectives, instructional strategies, and evaluation of each special student.
2. Assume responsibility for basic skills instruction for students with learning problems.
3. Have the achievement of all students as the primary concern.
4. Provide mainstreamed teachers with updated assessments of skill development of special students.
5. Be responsible for coordinating instruction and evaluation of mainstreamed students.

Administrators and support personnel should:

1. Develop and implement a procedure which will make coordination of instruction for special students a reality.
2. Develop and implement procedures that will provide accurate, relevant information about students to be mainstreamed to the classroom teacher.
3. Control the number of students being mainstreamed into each class at any one time so the basic nature of the classroom is not significantly altered.
4. See that appropriate equipment is provided within the mainstreamed class setting (tape recorders, projectors, etc.).
5. See that appropriate instructional materials are available to mainstreamed teacher (various reading levels, auditory materials).
6. Have the achievement of all students as a primary concern.

When all professionals and students involved assume their share of the responsibility, the models in Figure 2 should have overlapping circles with the special student in the center. One needs to add that problem areas have decreased but will never totally disappear.

Procedures for Successful Mainstreaming

Most classroom teachers with mainstreamed students frequently find that adapting for students with physical handicaps less troublesome than adapting to students who have difficulty with cognitive skills. Since most special students who are mainstreamed have learning handicaps rather than physical handicaps, the following techniques were formulated primarily for teaching students with below normal reading aptitude and skills.

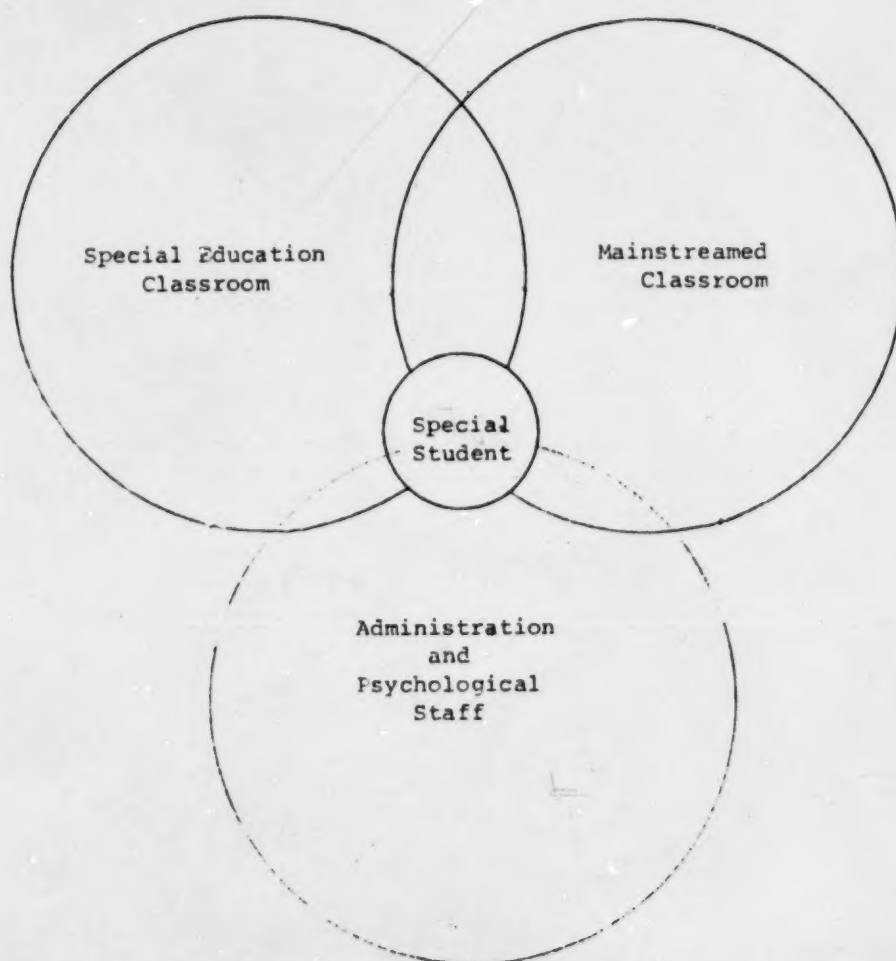


Figure 2

1. Provide audio sources of information for students who cannot read text and supplemental materials. The following are some suggestions.
 - a. Tape record text and other information.
 - b. Team reader and nonreader to work on reading assignment.
 - c. Adult volunteers to work with nonreaders.
 2. Provide alternate ways of completing assignments and tests. The following are some suggestions.
 - a. Tape answers to worksheets, guides, tests.
 - b. Use art, music, and drama.
 - c. Roleplaying and other simulations.
 - d. Games.
 - e. Interviews and guided observations.
 3. Increase presentations to entire class using methods that do not require reading. The following are some suggestions.
 - a. Movies, films, videotapes.
 - b. Demonstrations.
 - c. Illustrated talks and lectures.
 - d. Group presentations.
 - e. Guest speakers.
 - f. Field trips.
 4. Have reading materials on same content available at various reading levels.
 5. Provide group discussion of content and review of content.
 6. Use art, music, and drama as a form of presentation when appropriate.
- Teachers who want to use more recorded information for students with low reading skills can use a student who has completed their work to tape the information. Other sources making tapes are parent volunteers, service

projects for youth and civic groups and projects for older students. When teaming a regular student with a special student pairs should be rotated in order to provide an opportunity for many to serve as a team member and to avoid overusing one good-natured student. It is also important to provide a place for the pair to work without disturbing others.

Classroom management concerns are foremost on the minds of many teachers with mainstreamed students. Teachers need to be sure that seating is arranged in such a way that special students become an integral part of the total class; arrangements for safety of physically impaired students should be prearranged when interruption such as fire drills, assemblies, etc., occur.

If special equipment is required for special students, teachers need to consider the following as they plan.

1. Special equipment for mainstreamed students (glasses, hearing aids, wheelchairs, crutches, tape recorders, etc.) should be available at all times without requiring assistance.
2. Students should have a procedure and take the responsibility for taking care of special equipment when not in use.
3. A place for storage of special equipment should be provided. When possible the special student should be responsible for obtaining and returning special equipment from storage.

Special students frequently have had little or no experience in the diversified classroom, and therefore, can have difficulty adjusting to the behavioral expectations of the teachers. Teachers in the mainstreamed classes should take the following into consideration as they integrate special students into the routines of the class and its activities.

1. Expectations should be determined and communicated to the student.
2. Consequences of given behaviors should be determined and communicated.
3. Expectations should be essentially the same for all students.
4. Modification of expectations for special students should be few and clearly understood by all students.

Special students are mainstreamed as much for social learning as for the development of academic skills. Teachers will find it easier to work with mainstreamed students in the classrooms if they are aware of how these students can affect social interaction. They can then take some steps to make the social integration for special students more positive for regular students as well as for the special student. Following are some suggestions for teachers with mainstreamed students.

1. Expectations of students should include courtesy toward special students.
2. Special students should be included in all activities while in mainstreamed classroom, and regular students should be taught to expect them to participate.
3. Teasing, name calling, and other inappropriate behavior should not be tolerated.
4. Special students should be taught procedures for solving some of their own social problems.
5. Special students should not be allowed to expect regular students to be their servants.
6. Regular students should be taught to work with rather than do for special students.

7. Teachers should be aware of various adaptations made by special students to handicapes, i.e., withdrawal, attention demanding, acting helpless, etc.
 - a. Withdrawn students must be consistently encouraged to participate and provided opportunities to succeed.
 - b. Demanding students must be consistently expected to wait their turn.
 - c. Regular students need to be taught how to courteously expect demanding students to wait their turn.
 - d. Regular students need to be taught to expect special students to do as much as they can for themselves.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to give practical suggestions as well as the theory as it relates to the concept of mainstreaming. The conceptual framework identified (1) the problems that can occur with mainstreaming and (2) the rights and responsibilities of all participants. In addition, the paper offers suggestions for behavior management as well as special methods of dealing with special children in the mainstreamed classroom.